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1. Hoist and crane construction has become a bottleneck in the metallurgic part of the East German Five Year Plan. Important orders from EKO/Fuerstenberg, EKW/Calbe and other heavy industry plants can no longer be accepted by these crane construction plants as Bleichert/Leipzig¹ and Ardelet/Eberswalde.² These construction firms have priority reparations orders to complete; in addition, they are faced with a shortage of materials. In order to alleviate the situation, steel manufacturing firms, such as those that specialize only in bridge construction, are now to help with the construction of cranes and hoists.
2. At present four blast furnaces are in operation at EKO/Fuerstenberg. Furnaces 2, 3 and 4 are each producing 300 tons of pig iron daily. Furnace 1 is to be overhauled and to receive a new dolomite lining. Because of the breakdown that occurred when the furnace was put in operation, an impenetrable substance (Eisensau) (iron bear) was formed in the furnace up to the height of the air jets; the substance partially clogged the jets. By using the furnace for a long period with only a 50 percent charge, the lower part has partially been cleared. An attempt will be made to clear out the rest of the substance by operating the furnace with pure fuel only; after the furnace has cooled off the lining will be repaired only in the damaged places. Through this process it is hoped to shorten the repair time.
3. The coke plant at Lauchhammer is producing coke adequate for use in blast furnaces, although it is strongly hygroscopic and requires careful handling. At present Lauchhammer requires so many lignite briquettes for its ovens that they are hardly available for civilian consumption. Russian experts from the Soviet Metallurgical Industry inspected Lauchhammer and EKO/Fuerstenberg; they criticized technical details but spoke praisingly of the large scale lay-out and modern planning of the plants.

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